

backing the Commissioner to his official limit. The policemen want to go back to work. They want to see the Governor today offering to resume their posts and beats under the terms set forth by Mr. Gompers's telegram to Commissioner Curtis. They suggested that the policemen's union and the A. F. of L. charter could remain in statu quo until after October 6, when everything might be thrashed out in Washington during the conference between capitalists and labor. Meanwhile, they said, they'd go back to work as individuals.

To put it flatly, the Commissioner said in effect they'd do nothing of the kind; that they wouldn't go back to work at all; that there was nothing for them to go back to, and that if any or all of them saw an unoccupied job that looked good to them they'd better get it if they wanted to. In other words, the striking policemen are painfully through so far as the Commissioner is concerned.

Curtis Issues Ultimatum. Of course Commissioner Curtis did not use these words, but in nice Boston English he put himself on record as follows:

"It is manifest that the places in the police force formerly held by men who deserted their posts of duty have by this action been rendered vacant. I am advised by the Attorney-General and labor leaders that the places formerly held by the members of the police force, to whom I have referred, are in fact and in law, vacant.

"I am accordingly proceeding in accordance with law and in strict compliance with the requirements of the civil service law to fill these vacancies with new men. I have submitted to the Governor Boston recommendations for immediate adoption relating to a revision of salaries for the lowest paid members of the police force, and I shall later submit recommendations for a revision of the entire salary list.

"I have further requested the Civil Service Commission to grant its authority to the appointing authority for any veterans who are defined by chapter 150 of the General Acts of 1919, whether such veterans be residents of Boston or not.

"The Attorney-General has ruled that such veterans must be residents of the Commonwealth, but need not be residents of the city of Boston.

It was that statement, communicated to Mr. Gompers, that drew his terse hand grenade. So no matter how one looks at the situation, nor where one sympathizes lie, the fact remains that the next step is up to the A. F. of L. If a general strike is the result Boston waits it; awaits it with considerable trepidation and apprehension, but it stands up, ready for the fray.

Bring on your general strike, says official Boston. Boston's and Massachusetts rulers have thrown down the gauntlet.

Governor Issues Statement. Gov. Coolidge, a Republican, and a candidate for reelection in November, issued this statement:

"At a conference with labor leaders, held at their request, details were presented to me under which I shall be guided by the opinion of the Attorney-General.

"I understand the matter of the telegram has been conveyed to Mr. Curtis. Whether he has made any decision on it, I do not know. I undertook to transmit their request for a conference between President O'Donnell, Organizer McCarthy and myself, to the Commissioner of Police."

"Then the Governor telegraphed Samuel Gompers as follows: "Under your law, suggestions contained in your telegram are not within the authority of the Governor of Massachusetts, but only of the Commissioner of Police of the city of Boston."

"With the maintenance of discipline in his department I have no authority to interfere. He has decided that the men have abandoned their sworn duty and are accordingly declared places vacant. I shall support the Commissioner in the execution of law and maintenance of order."

Commissioner Curtis not only refused to treat with the labor men but caused this proclamation to be issued to all police captains:

"None of the patrolmen who failed to report for duty September 9, 1919, or since that time, may return to duty under any circumstances; nor are they to be allowed to remain on letter on the premises of the different station houses.

"When officers report back from vacations or sickness the division commander will communicate at once in each instance with the superintendent for instructions.

"You are also instructed that no open air rallies or anything calculated to draw a crowd are to be permitted until further orders.

President Wilson might appeal to the Massachusetts authorities to rescind their apparently adamant dictum and he might, by personal appeal, fetch about a break in the deadlock—call it a look-out if you will—but that's only a matter of conjecture.

Folks down this way have a rather ingrained conviction that they have and can run their own affairs themselves. It's not easy to bend the Puritan will. A Yankee is not prone to vaillation. The strike has bred a healthy and twofold condition of affairs.

sector and has shown Massachusetts that he is ready to link or swim, survive or perish, where he stands. And the city of Boston is for him.

Col. Frank S. Perkins, A. E. F., is the Republican candidate for State Treasurer. I mention him merely because he is the soldier on the ticket, the bait for the soldier vote.

Now whether the pressions of soldiers on the streets of Boston and the fact that their rifles have already killed eight and wounded forty will cause an anti-military revolution which will defeat Col. Perkins remains to be seen. At any rate, he is the possible weak spot on the ticket.

Mayor Peters has yet two years to serve. He is a Democrat and a former Representative in Congress. Immediately previous to his election as Mayor he was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under President Wilson.

The Mayor is an intimate friend of the President and equally friendly with former Secretary McAdoo. He has been relegated to the side lines in the shadow of Gov. Coolidge. The Police Commissioner of Boston is an appointee of the Governor under the law. You can make your own political deductions.

Girl Labor Leader With Ability. There's a young woman, Miss May Matthews, in this town and she heads the telephone operators' union. Let those who think that Boston Matthews has not assumed all the responsibilities of citizenship and developed into a person wholly capable of dominating a labor union section in an interview with Miss Matthews in an extremely capable person.

She says that the telephone operators' union is willing to quit work if things come to a showdown. She is not a demagogue, merely a sincere upholder of the sovereignty of labor as a class. She does not advocate striking merely to help the police, but she does favor a walkout if there comes a straight battle between capital and labor here.

"The girls I have talked with are anxious to strike," she says. "No other telephone operators outside of Boston will be allowed to take our places if we quit, nor will outside operators handle Boston calls if we strike. We shall be entirely orderly. We will do everything in our power to suppress disorder."

The laws governing the organization of the police of Boston were adopted with a view of keeping the police out of politics. Just how close to this political asylum these laws have approached, is the subject of much debate.

In the first place, the State of Massachusetts is normally Republican. The city of Boston is Democratic. But the city cannot roll up a sufficiently large Democratic vote to affect the Republicanism of the State outside the big city.

How Lawmakers Figured. This was the promise upon which the police laws were built. It was figured that if a Republican Governor appointed a Police Commissioner for Boston the chances were that he'd obey political instructions and not be a sufficient political persuasion. He has consistently done this.

A Republican Commissioner would not be likely to permit his police to be manipulated as to assist the Democratic Mayor to further Democratic ends. This, too, has been followed out as per schedule.

Therefore, the lawmakers argued, the Republican State outside of Boston could rest assured that the Police Department of Boston was not going to be used to violate the Republican integrity of the Commonwealth. However Democratic Boston wanted to become it would be wholly up to Boston men and their police force.

Boston, where the scheme has worked well. It has as a natural matter of course resulted in some friction between the Mayor and the Commissioner, but never to the extent of a strike. The Mayor expects no reciprocal political favors from the other. Up until this coming gubernatorial election the term of office of the Governor has been one year. Whether the elected Governor of Massachusetts this November will be chosen for a two year term under the new laws.

Before the law no precedent makes it obligatory for the Police Commissioner to resign upon the election of a new Governor. Gov. Coolidge appointed Commissioner Curtis, but Curtis's predecessor, Steve O'Meara, held the job thirteen years under thirteen State administrations—Republican and Democratic.

Man Killed by Soldier. The eighth death directly traceable to the police strike occurred to-day. It was not the result of rioting nor even a game. Moreover, there is quite a little pro and con discussion about the killing. A shot hit a woman in the leg after passing through the stomach of the man it killed. One death on Thursday laid to the strike was afterward attributed to other causes.

"There is no room under our form of government for forcible coercion of the people or the constituted authorities by any class or group. It is fitting that this twentieth century battle for true democracy should be fought out in the shadow of Bunker Hill. The result, like the guns of Lexington, will be heard around the world."

Fire Fighters Offer Help. The officials protest that there is no foundation for fear that the firemen will strike. They add that even if the firemen do quit Boston will not be left a prey to flames. From virtually every New England town that boasts a paid fire department of more than a dozen

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GOMPERS BLAMES CURTIS FOR STRIKE

Says Walkout Was Provoked and Practically Forced on Policemen.

CALLS HIM AN AUTOCRAT

Telegraphs Gov. Coolidge an Appeal for a Review of the Situation.

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, sent a telegram from the Continental Hotel last night to Gov. Coolidge of Massachusetts appealing to the Governor, to Mayor Peters and to Police Commissioner Curtis of Boston to "take a broad view of the entire situation," and later gave out a statement in which he blamed the police strike to Commissioner Curtis.

The statement follows: "The unionizing of policemen is not of the seeking of the American Federation of Labor. "Their voluntary organization and insistent demand for charters is the natural reflex of a just individual attempt to improve working conditions. Therefore the American Federation of Labor was and is called upon to meet a situation created by inoperative, negligent or autocratic municipal authorities. When men are underpaid or made to work under bad conditions they seek redress. Unable to right their grievances or obtain better working conditions from their immediate superiors, they look for redress elsewhere. This was the case in Boston.

"When policemen accept charters from the American Federation of Labor it is with the distinct understanding that the labor legislation in accordance with no obligation is assumed which in any way conflicts with their oath or duty. In the American Federation of Labor they are given such advice and counsel, out of it, or affiliated with some un-American or irresponsible organization a situation might develop which would cause real concern and for which the American Federation of Labor does not care to accept even remote responsibility by refusing to take them in and guide them aright."

Responsibility of Authorities. "Unfortunately and regrettable as the strike of the Boston policemen was, surely sound public opinion will make the authorities in Boston admit and share their own full responsibility for it. The situation in which the policemen find themselves to-day was provoked and practically forced upon them by the autocratic action of Police Commissioner Curtis, who at any time might have honorably settled the dispute by such action as is naturally expected of a public official in his responsible position.

"Even now, vested with individual, autocratic authority, with which even the Governor states he has no power to interfere, he declares the places of approximately 1,400 policemen vacant. Surely there is some weight of justice in Boston that will prevent this individual, whose vision and interests probably do not extend beyond the scope of the Boston police area, from openly antagonizing the great American labor movement and making the work of its officers to lead sound and progressive lines most difficult if not impossible.

"If the authorities give no consideration to the human side of the question or to the advice and suggestion which I had the honor to make, then what-ever betide is upon the heads of the authorities responsible therefor."

Message to Governor. "Mr. Gompers's telegram to the Bay State Governor reads: "Your telegram received. While I am

one possibly could be. The question at issue that I am so much concerned in the maintenance of law and order as any one possibly can be. The question at issue is not one of law and order, but the assumption of an autocratic and unwarranted position by the Commissioner of Police, who is not responsible to the people of Boston, but who is appointed by you. Whatever disorder has occurred is due to his order, in which the right of the policeman to organize has been denied—a right which has heretofore never been questioned.

"My appeal to you as Governor and to Hon. Andrew J. Peters, Mayor of Boston, was not to sustain lawlessness, but to honorably adjust a mutually unsatisfactory situation in accordance with a suggestion by the President of the United States in a similar case. Nothing but good can result from favorable action upon my suggestion. May I not further appeal to you, to Mayor Peters and the Police Commissioner, to take a broad view of the entire situation and thus give the opportunity for cool, deliberate consideration upon the positions aroused shall have subsided?"

Governor Had Backed Curtis. "The foregoing telegram was in reply to a message received by Mr. Gompers earlier in the day from Gov. Coolidge, in which the state executive insisted he share the responsibility for the enforcement of law and maintenance of order." Gov. Coolidge's wire in turn was in reply to another telegram sent by the labor leader asking the Governor to permit the policemen to return to their work.

Mr. Gompers earlier in the afternoon, before he had received official confirmation of the commissioner's action in regard to the striking policemen, asserted that "if the present haughty, autocratic attitude of Police Commissioner Curtis is maintained, the consequences will rest on their own heads. I have been doing and am doing and will continue to do everything I can to relieve the situation. But repeat that if they (the Massachusetts authorities) continue to act in their present unreasonable manner whatever happens will be up to them."

STRIKE CALL AT YOUNGSTOWN. Workers Exhorted in Three Tongues Not to Falter.

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio, Sept. 13.—Circul- ulars published by the American Federation of Labor committee for organizing the steel industry were distributed at steel mills here to-day calling on all workers not bound by union agreement to strike on September 22, pursuant to the strike call recently issued.

The circulars were signed by John Fitzpatrick of Chicago, chairman, and William Z. Foster of Pittsburgh, secretary. They warn against violence and appeal for no faltering, "or we will sink into a miserable and hopeless serfdom." They are printed in English, Italian and Slavonic.

BOOKBINDERS JOIN STRIKERS. Publishers' Printing Co. Suffers New Defection in Its Force.

After the Publishers Printing Company, 207 West Twenty-fifth street, had scored Friday over the striking pressmen and paper handlers by moving into the plant several rolls of paper the strikers had boasted would not be moved, the strikers shouted yesterday over what they consider a victory over the publishers when the men and boys known as loaders and associated with the bookbinders went out in sympathy with the pressmen and paper handlers.

The strikers insist that the *Laborer's Digest* circulation has been greatly affected by the strike and that the publishers are able to get out only a few thousand copies. Robert Cuddihy, treasurer of the *Digest*, admitted that the issue would be about twenty thousand copies behind, but added that there

would be only a few days delay in getting that matter straightened out. Mr. Cuddihy said the strikers had greatly exaggerated the setback administered by the strike.

There was little doing for the squad of police still detailed outside the plant. Pickets were allowed to walk up and down in front of the building, but as there was no attempt to take anything into the building in the way of paper or ink there was little for the pickets to do.

LABOR EQUALITY TO BE TREATY CLAUSE
Polk Asks Permission to Sign Pact Agreed To.

By a Staff Correspondent of THE SUN. Copyright, 1919, all rights reserved. PARIS, Sept. 13.—Under-Secretary Polk has cabled to Washington for permission to sign the various conventions here with the new nations, in which the principle of the equality, in treatment of workers is declared. The idea underlying this is that the workmen of one country going to another can claim the same rates and privileges as is extended to the citizens of that country.

This is a new idea in treaties and is to be incorporated in the conventions here even in advance of the labor conference in Washington. It involves an interesting question for the United States in view of the tremendous immigration there from the countries affected by these new treaties. There is much interest here as to the attitude that American labor will take on this question.

Esthonia to Expel Foreigners. STOCKHOLM, Sept. 13.—The Esthonian Government has decided to expel about 4,000 foreigners from Esthonia, according to advices from Petrograd. The Government is considering further the expulsion of all persons who have established themselves in Esthonia since 1915. The overwhelming majority of these are Russians.

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